

Cambridge Language Sciences Annual Symposium 2023

Language and Mental Wellbeing: 16 November 2023

Research Dialogue 1: Speech, language and multi-modal technologies in healthcare settings, including human-robot interactions

Taking affective robots into the real world: challenges and opportunities

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Affective robots, capable of recognizing, interpreting, processing, and simulating human emotions, have gained significant attention for their potential in various social contexts. This includes promoting mental well-being, aiding in learning, and supporting the rehabilitation of children with special needs. However, despite the need to evaluate and deploy these robots in real-world settings such as schools or hospitals, most of the current research has been confined to in-the-lab studies. As such, one of the primary challenges in the field of affective robotics is to successfully bring these robots into real-world scenarios, thereby overcoming the limitation of applicability and generalization of results obtained in the lab.

This presentation will address the current challenges identified in literature for the deployment of affective robots in real-world scenarios. By sharing insights from various case studies, ranging from the use of robots in the treatment of language disorders in children to utilising robotic coaches for promoting mental well-being, this talk will shed light on the obstacles faced in bringing affective robots out of the lab and into practical applications. Additionally, potential solutions and future directions for advancing the field will also be discussed.

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